

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A method of ~~doing business~~ exchanging tickets electronically, comprising:
 - providing an electronic ticket control system for issuing virtual tickets to public-facility patrons through virtual ticket devices;
 - receiving virtual ticket exchange requests from a plurality of virtual ticket devices;
 - storing the exchange requests in an exchange request database;
 - analyzing the exchange requests to determine if any are eligible for exchange;
 - sending an exchange notification message to the virtual ticket devices associated with at least one eligible exchange;
 - receiving an exchange confirmation message from the eligible virtual ticket devices associated with the at least one exchange; and
 - updating the virtual tickets when all virtual ticket devices associated with the at least one exchange respond affirmatively.
2. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~doing business~~ of claim 1, further comprising the step of maintaining an ownership database for storing ownership information related to issued virtual tickets.

3. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of doing business~~ of claim 2, further comprising the step of updating the ticket ownership database to reflect a change in ownership resulting from a ticket exchange.

4. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of doing business~~ of claim 1, further comprising the step of, before storing the exchange request in the database, confirming ownership of any virtual tickets offered for exchange.

5. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of doing business~~ of claim 1, wherein the step of analyzing includes comparing the exchange conditions of more than two exchange requests in order to determine if more than two requests can be satisfied in the same exchange transaction.

6. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of doing business~~ of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing a downloadable virtual ticket exchange user-interface program for downloading by patrons onto virtual ticket devices and use in exchanging virtual tickets through the electronic ticket control system.

7. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of doing business~~ of claim 1, further comprising the step of performing a validity check with respect to the received request before storing it in the exchange request database.

8. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of doing business~~ of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

performing a validity check on ticket exchange requests stored in the database; and

deleting stored requests that are determined to be invalid.

9. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of doing business~~ of claim 1, further comprising the step of sending a message to at least one virtual ticket device, the message containing information relating to virtual ticket exchange requests.

10. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of doing business~~ of claim 9, wherein the information relating to virtual ticket exchange requests includes a notification that a request has been received that corresponds to the virtual ticket stored on the virtual ticket device.

11. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of doing business~~ of claim 9 wherein the information relating to virtual ticket requests further includes an incentive for offering for exchange the ticket held on the virtual ticket device.

12. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of doing business~~ of claim 1 further comprising the step of charging a service fee to customers for brokering the exchange request

13 (Currently Amended) The method ~~of doing business~~ of claim 1 further comprising the steps of ~~charging~~ charging the account of a first patron an amount for the ticket exchange; and
crediting the account of a second patron a corresponding amount for the ticket exchange.

14. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of doing business~~ of claim 1 wherein at least some of the exchange requests include information that a patron is either willing to pay for or requires payment for a ticket exchange.

15. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of doing business~~ of claim 14 further comprising the steps of charging the account of a first patron an amount for the ticket exchange; and
crediting the account of a second patron a corresponding amount for the ticket exchange.

16. (Original) An electronic ticket exchange system for use by public-facility patrons having virtual tickets stored on virtual ticket devices that are capable of communicating with the ticket exchange system, said ticket exchange system comprising:

an exchange request database for storing information related to exchange requests received from virtual ticket devices;

a processor in communication with the exchange request database;

a ticket-exchange control program for directing the processor to compare exchange requests stored on the exchange request database to determine if an exchange is possible.

17. (Original) The system of claim 16, further comprising a seat-view image database for storing images that can be transmitted to a virtual ticket device.

18. (Original) The ticket exchange system of claim 16, wherein the ticket control program also directs the processor to confirm the validity of virtual ticket exchange requests.

19. (Original) The ticket exchange system of claim 16, further comprising a downloadable user-interface program.

20. (Original) The ticket exchange system of claim 16, further comprising an ownership database for storing information related to public-facility virtual ticket ownership.

21. (Original) The ticket exchange system of claim 20, wherein the ticket exchange control program directs the processor to confirm the ownership of any virtual ticket offered for exchange.

22. (Original) The ticket exchange system of claim 16, further comprising a terminal in communication with the ticket exchange system that accepts public-facility tickets that are not virtual tickets and converts them to virtual tickets for possible exchange.

23. (Original) The ticket exchange system of claim 22, wherein the terminal reissues a second non-virtual ticket in exchange for a first non-virtual ticket that has been successfully exchanged.

24. (Currently Amended) A method of ~~doing business~~ exchanging tickets electronically, comprising:

electronically brokering ~~the an~~ exchange ~~of seats~~ between first and second patrons at a public facility of at least one ticket held by the first patron for at least one ticket held by the second patron.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24 further comprising the step of providing at least one of the first and second patrons images of views from seats associated with the tickets available for exchange.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25 further comprising charging at least one of the first and second patrons a service fee for the exchange.

27. (Original) The method of claim 26 wherein the service fee is based upon the selling price of the exchanged tickets.

28. (Original) The method of claim 24 comprising the step of prioritizing ticket exchange requests.